

The Sacramento District Review

4 Lost Lodge Rd, Cloudcroft, NM 88317

575-682-2551

Bailey Wetland Restoration Project



Bailey Canyon before restoration

green-house gases from the Earth's atmosphere, slowing the onset of global warming.

ter, causing erosion and lowering the water table which in return was drying out the wetland and wet meadow habitats.

To restore the wetland habitat in Bailey Canyon, the Lincoln National Forest and associated partners (ex. Center for Wetlands and Stream Restoration, Bat Conservation International, Otero County, Southern New Mexico Resource Advisory Committee, and Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso Campus) collaborated together in funding or implementing the project.

Techniques developed and tested by the Center for Wetlands and Stream Restoration were implemented to restore and construct wetlands that look and function like natural wetlands, with desired hydro-periods, aquatic vegetation, and animal life.

All funding for project implementation was provided by the Secure Rural Schools Program-Title II funds.

Jack Williams More than half of the original 221 million acres of wetlands that existed in the United States at the time of early European settlement were destroyed by the 1980s. Unfortunately over the years, many of these ecosystems have been lost or altered, affecting wildlife, reducing water quality, increasing flooding, and reducing ground water supplies.

Over the years, off highway vehicle (OHV) traffic on the Sacramento Ranger District had caused deep rutting and compaction of soils in Bailey Canyon. The soils exposed by OHV's were becoming colonized by non-native, invasive plants. The deep tire ruts were channeling wa-

Small wetlands and pooled water habitats are critical for many species of amphibians, invertebrates, birds, and mammals on the Sacramento Ranger District. Whether within or outside the Sacramento Ranger District, wetlands are essential ecological features in any landscape. They are the primary habitat for many species of waterfowl as well as other birds, fish, mammals and insects.

Wetlands naturally filter and recharge the water that comes from the ground. Wetlands also prevent soil erosion and buffer water bodies from potentially damaging land use activities.

In addition, wetlands can remove and store



Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

-Alfred, Lord Tennyson,
1850



The twelve months...
"Snowy, Flowy, Blowy,
Showery, Flowery,
Bowery,
Hoppy, Croppy,
Droppy,
Breezy, Sneezy, Freezy."

- George Ellis

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Bailey Wetland Restoration Project Cont...



Bailey wetland on its way to restoration

The Title II funds may be used for the purpose of making additional investments in, and creating additional employment opportunities through projects that improve the maintenance of existing infrastructure, implement stewardship objectives that enhance forest ecosystems, and restore and improve land health and water quality in counties throughout the United States.

Projects should have broad based support with objectives that may include, but are not limited to:

- Road, trail, and infrastructure maintenance or obliteration
- Soil productivity improvement
- Improvements in forest ecosystem health
- Watershed restoration and maintenance

tion and maintenance

- Restoration, maintenance and improvement of wildlife and fish

habitat

- Control of noxious and exotic weeds
- Reestablishment of native species.

The Bailey Canyon Wetland Restoration project improved habitat for wildlife, providing habitat for rare species while restoring soil productivity, and cleaning water by restoring five ephemeral, emergent, and wet meadow wetlands on the Sacramento Ranger District. The project also trained Federal and State personnel in the use of low cost and highly effective techniques for improving wildlife habitat and restoring wetlands at high elevations.

Heavy equipment was utilized to restore the wetlands by blocking ditches, reshaping natural contours, and loosening compacted soils. Logs and branches were

returned to the wetlands to improve habitat for birds, amphibians, and reptiles. The wetlands were restored to provide habitat for mega fauna such as mule deer, elk, turkey, mountain lion, bobcats, black bears, bats, and a variety of amphibians such as New Mexico spade foot toad, and the tiger salamander.

Some unauthorized roads that were damaging Bailey Canyon were permanently closed. This in return will protect the habitat for the Sacramento Mountains Checkerspot Butterfly.

What can you do to help protect wetlands? If you witness wetlands being damaged, please call the Sacramento Ranger District at 575-682-2551 or email us at: sacramentoinfo@fs.fed.us.

For further information about the project and additional technical information, please contact the district biologist Jack Williams at 575-682-2551.

Fuel Wood Permits

Fuel wood permits are still available at the Sacramento District Office. Fuel wood permits issued in December expired at the end of 2011. There are two fuelwood cutting areas open, Spud and Walker, located off I6 Springs. As a reminder, rain and/or snow can cause these areas to close. Please call the district office for the latest updates/closure information at 575-682-2551.



Office Hours

The Sacramento Ranger District Office is located in the Village of Cloudcroft, at 4 Lost Lodge Road, one mile south of Highway 82 on Highway 130. We are open Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Closed Saturdays, Sundays and Federal Holidays.

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Eagles on the Sacramento Ranger District



American Bald Eagle

Reuben Gay

Look! Up in the sky, it's a bird it's a plane. No! It's an eagle! Lately there have been a handful of sightings of eagles on the Sacramento Ranger District. If you are ever out on the district during late fall and winter, you may get lucky enough to witness such a magnificent bird. That's because winter in southern New Mexico is the prime season for sightings of eagles like the American Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle. These two species of eagles winter from southern Yukon Territory (Canada) to southern New Mexico, ideally in mountainous areas with suf-

ficient water. For people seeking to see bald eagles and golden eagles on the Lincoln National Forest, the primary areas are where there is water and open fields.

One should also know how to distinguish the two species. Known as one of the most symbolic creatures of our country, the bald eagle is easy to identify if seen. Due to its large size and snow capped head and tail; one will surely know a bald eagle at first glance. However, golden eagles can be easily mistaken for another large common bird such as the turkey vulture.

Separating golden eagles from bald eagles is usually easy, based on wing and tail patterns, but occasionally golden eagles have white markings on the under wing coverts.

Golden eagles tend to be very large and dark weighing in at 10 pounds with a wingspan of up to 79 inches while bald eagles will usually weigh 9 pounds and have a wingspan of 80 inches. Wow, two huge raptors!

When observing eagles, it is recommended that you stay in your vehicle, unless you're visiting a manned eagle observation deck. A vehicle acts as a perfect blind for the bird. People walking around or toward a perched eagle will chase it off its roost. The effort of flying depletes the needed energy an eagle requires to survive in cold winter temperatures.

So, remember when viewing these beautiful creatures have respect for the animal and its environment while enjoying the grace of these magnificent birds.

Winter Recreation

For those that like to get out and play in the forest here are some recreation activities you can only enjoy in the winter. When snow is available, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, snow shoeing, and down-hill skiing are all available in the Cloudcroft area. Designated cross-country ski trails can be found at Silver, Saddle and Apache Campgrounds off of Hwy 244.

Head to Ski Cloudcroft just east of Cloudcroft to enjoy down-hill skiing. Triple M Snowplay offers guided snowmobile trips on the forest near the Benson Ridge area. Recreationists can partake in all four activities anywhere on the forest unless otherwise posted.

Please contact the Sacramento Ranger District (575-682-2551) for more information on these activities. Please directly contact the above businesses to determine availability.



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The Ranger's Report



James Duran
Sacramento District
Ranger

James Duran

The new year is upon us and the Sacramento Ranger District is ramping up for another productive season. It will soon be a year that I have served as the district ranger and I thought I'd take the time to share some observations.

First, I'm very fortunate to have so many great employees on the district and I know our employees are committed to public service. They offer great experience in both natural resource management and public service. Most employees are from the

local area and call this mountain their home. They all go to work each day striving to do a job their neighbors can be proud of. For that, I am very thankful.

Strong public involvement in government provides an excellent opportunity for all citizens to assist the USDA Forest Service in meeting the needs of the public by partnering with us into the new year in cooperative management of our public lands.

This can be done through development of proposals, sharing concerns, volunteering, leading management efforts or simply supporting the USDA Forest Service's management strategies. In order to answer your questions, it is critical that you provide feedback and assist with the development of solutions to public concerns.

Much of the administrative process that we use in coordination of management activities on public land involves the public as well as other government partners. Citizens are called upon to bring forward comments, ideas, management options, and partnerships.

I look forward to connecting with all of you in the new year, and look forward to sharing the Sacramento Ranger District's vision and accomplishments in forest management into the new year. Happy 2012 and I look forward to making this a positive year for all public land users.

Your questions can be submitted and may be answered if you mail your letter to Attention: Ranger, Sacramento Ranger District, PO Box 288, Cloudcroft NM 88317.

Write a letter to the Ranger

If you've ever wondered about timber harvests, endangered species, off-road vehicle use, or other natural resource management topics, this is your opportunity to get your answer.

Individuals aspiring to acquire knowledge about the US Forest Service are encouraged to escape the fast-paced world of technology and write a good old-fashioned letter to the Ranger.

If you would like to write a letter to James Duran, Sacramento District Ranger, please mail it to: P.O. Box 288, Cloudcroft, NM 88317.

